

CIA opposes absolute ban on recruiting journalists

Washington (AP)—The Central Intelligence Agency should not be barred from recruiting foreign reporters or American journalists who are not accredited by a U.S. news organization, the spy agency's chief said yesterday.

Adm. Stansfield Turner, the CIA director, said such a prohibition would unduly restrict the agency's intelligence-gathering ability.

Admiral Turner testified before a House intelligence subcommittee on regulations he issued last year banning the CIA from establishing relationships with news correspondents—accredited by a U.S. news organization—for the purpose of conducting intelligence activities.

"I'm reluctant to keep drawing finer and finer lines," he said in arguing against further restrictions.

"A U.S. media representative could quite legally work for the KGB [the Soviet security police] but, under these regulations, not for me."

Admiral Turner also argued in favor of retaining a provision authorizing him to waive the restrictions and to enlist a U.S.-accredited reporter if he feels it necessary.

He said the escape clause would be used only in "an emergency situation—a life-or-death situation."

On other points, Admiral Turner said:

- Communist-bloc intelligence services use their own journalists and news outlets such as Tass and *Pravda* for intelligence work and as a cover for intelligence operatives.

He said the CIA also suspects that journalists from non-Communist countries are used, either wittingly or unwittingly, by

the KGB as sources of "information or disinformation."

- CIA agents stationed in U.S. embassies withhold some information from the ambassador even though the diplomat is in charge of all embassy personnel. Such information could include the names of sources or foreign agents or details of operations.

"It doesn't mean [the ambassador] is not in charge, but he doesn't need all the details to be in charge," Admiral Turner said.

On the journalist-recruiting ban, he told the subcommittee, "We believe it is fair to require that a journalist be duly accredited in order to be covered by this regulation."

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